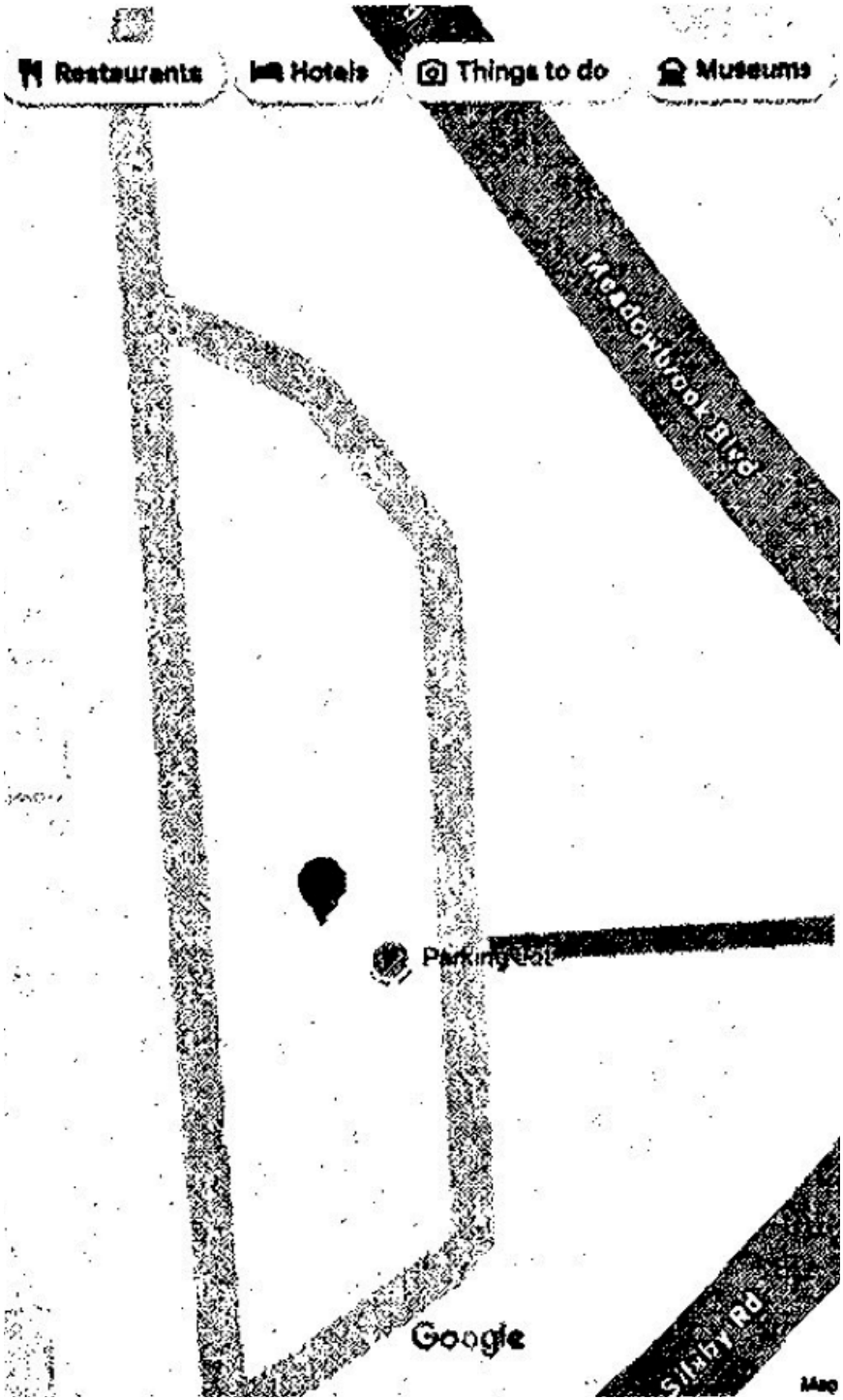
Restaurants
Hotels
Things to do
Museums
Meadowood Blvd
Parking lot
Google
Silsby Rd

“Find Your Ontological Center”

A Collection of Writing

About, Inspired by, Adjacent,
or Otherwise In Response to

the Cedar Lee Parking Lot

Presented by Community Mausoleum
& Cleveland Review of Books

Published April 26, 2025
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During the Cleveland Poetry Festival

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Edition of 100

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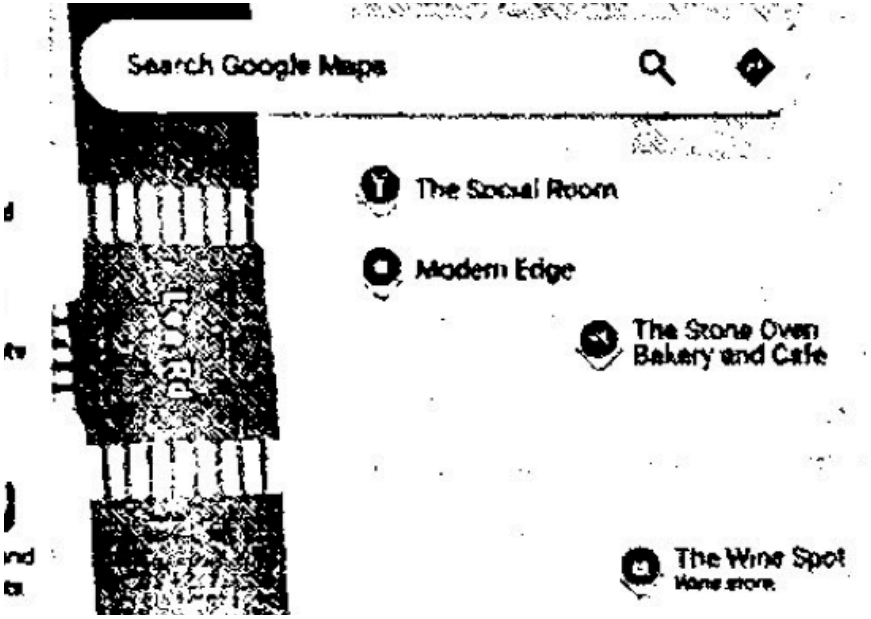
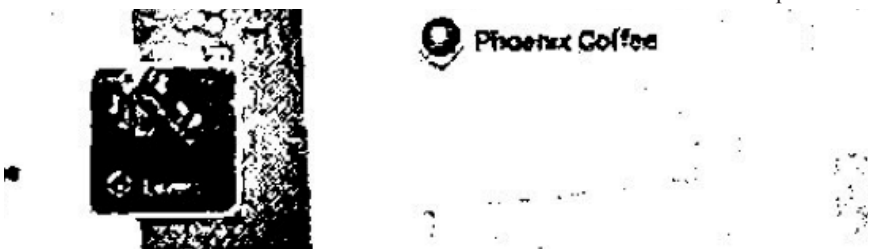


Students of local cartography may be keen to point out that the intersection of Meadowbrook Blvd. and Silsby Rd., which locates Cleveland Heights Parking Lot #17 (otherwise known as the "Cedar Lee Parking Lot") on the globe, just happens to form a near-perfect X. We wondered what to make of this coincidence, if it was a coincidence at all. What spot did this X mark, really? And in what manner could or should this be important, when to us the Cedar Lee Parking Lot has been a long-running ontological center, not the X but the actual crux at the written character's middle, which after all is what the X truly marks, the map being not the territory, &c. Feeling the requisite blend of stump and wonder, we called upon fellow denizens of this theoretical zone to help us make better sense of the thought-feeling we were attempting with limited success to navigate alone. Our questions were simple: What is a parking lot? What is land? What are your waypoints? How do you orient? Where are you located? What is central? How do you know? What follows is a set of responses to these prompts, becoming a document of the Cedar Lee Parking Lot's time-place specificity, just one among spacetime's infinite flux and yet a fully singular one nonetheless, where a good bar is also a hospital and the parking is always free, apparently, and where friendships form and expand according to shared projects of writing and reading.

—Zach Peckham & Billy Lennon
April 2025



Parking Structure

Conor Bracken

A garbage truck lifts a dumpster up
at the exact moment the driver lifts his travel mug

as my neighbors married decades enter
their respective cars, sinking

onto right butt cheek then lifting left leg in
in such perfect synchronicity it feels

like a glitch—the world running low
on processing power so it repeats

its most efficient choreography.
On the Port-a-johns leaning into one other

like teeth, I read, or want to read,
Great Leaks instead of Great Lakes Supply.

She asks about thunder and lightning,
so to explain that they're the same I use

the language common to us—*Mulan*,
when the Mongol horde scales the Wall,

the watchman lights a fire
which causes other fires to be lit

such that the fire reaches the city
long before the hissing of a hail

of arrows, the whinny of a rearing horse.
Time reminds me it exists with much

more ampleness than I do, so I must choose—
I choose accident over intention,

the alignment of random vehicles
into temporary rows. As a kid,

I loved how from the highway
the row between each cornrow ran

straight as a spoke up to the horizon
until the next row and the next row arrived

to drive its spoke into my eye.
This isn't the memoir about riding my bike

in suburban Cleveland, called *Little Potholes Everywhere.*
Let's say it's the dream in which a poet takes

my hand in hers, to crack a knuckle I had
no idea I had.

DUMB B ONTOLOGY

Hilary Plum

Taylor won't come here

Sat outside at the Social Room, everyone was worked up

about Meadowbrook and Silsby

One guy just looking at bags

A sandwich you thought would be warm was cold

Saw a mouse in TavCo, you all told me not to tell anyone

When I was new here I got taken to TavCo

There was another new girl so I had to do better

Later in a pandemic she and I were locked up together

Made pierogies

Saw Geraldo in TavCo, he looked like TV

Misremembered where I heard the anecdote

about the poet after he got out of prison

broke, bitter and the bartenders

knowing him, descending on him

Everyone's moving to Cleveland

Everyone's from Cleveland Halle Berry

Frederic Jameson Sam Ace

sorry I yelled in front of you when you were behind me

in the crosswalk on Cedar said a guy from my work

the fuck was that about fuck Machine Gun Kelly

going to Shaker Heights High then signing with Diddy

Lockdown was hard on rats, the guy killing rats said

I have been in every house in Cleveland Heights

as well as some other Heightses

The preacher dragging an amp and harassing you

at the march against the genocide in Gaza

He'll come to Cedar Lee Halloween

you'll see him there later he's for genocide

and against Halloween

We crossed the bridge and the sky was gray

Kelce's first Superbowl everyone's porches were lit red

Kelce's second Superbowl no one gave a shit

Made eye contact with the mayor in Rising Star good day

College boys behind you at the Kenzo

talking about the fucking Silmarillion

What's not an allegory Election night at TavCo

I used to teach in prison but I messed up

Too much work and family stuff I couldn't get there

anymore yet here I was

in these same goddamn bars every night

I do not want to hear about the Cleveland Foundation

guy from my work coming over

I'm eating my sandwich at Stone Oven

standing in front of the IPA at the Wine Spot

could I just reassure him could never make that much money

but I will spend it at TavCo

There are other cities in Cleveland

in our prisons Poets never live as long

as poetry I am always meeting you at one of these bars

Left my backpack in the Social Room 100% of my poetry equipment

in there They just kept it all safe for me good day

My mom moved here Your mom moved here

Your dad moved here Your mom moved here

I ordered an IPA

Followed our favorite reporter home from the protest

Still working Everyone in prison is also a poet

And the dead And all of you

I have asked you specifically to write on my tombstone

“I’m at the Kenzo you dumb bitch” the truth is

I will finally not be at the Kenzo

A Parking Lot Sonnet

Danny Caine

Downtown Cleveland is 26% parking lot
and so am I. Parking on the street in front
of my rented house has given me more
murderous rage than I'd like to admit.
I genuinely believe that garage privilege
makes people forget about the struggle.
My favorite part of the poetry reading
last night was discovering a parking lot
behind the second location that I hadn't
known about before. Even if you can
know a parking lot, it can't know you.
Can a parking lot even be discovered if
it has always already been there? And where
did all these stupid fucking pickups come from?

Lemongrass

L Scully

One thing I like about myself is that I forget my whole life which sounds kind of fucked up and sad but I mean it. Like I like it when someone tells me a story about myself or what happened to me. Actually yeah it is sad but it's also happy when someone says *Remember this? Remember them? You guys fucked? You were laughing? They used to live with us?* It's devastating and sweet that someone else might hold my memories for me and remind me of them when my head gets all empty and I can't remember which name I'm going by or in which towns I might have visited the hospital (Amherst, Bethesda, Cambridge, Cleveland, damn it's actually almost alphabetical). The last time I can really really remember stuff whether it's awash with nostalgia or post-concussion syndrome or AP European History is high school. My high school boyfriend was a dishwasher at Lemongrass, which was the Thai restaurant next to Cedar Lee Theater. It closed in March 2015 after we'd both left home. They had really good Thai iced tea and pretty much everything else. It was a nice place to eat. Sometimes my friends got food that was too spicy and they would fix it. I don't know how you fix spicy food aside from throwing it out and making a new non-spicy batch but I do know there were no complaints. Not that I would complain. I worked in a Japanese restaurant near Larchmere which also doesn't exist anymore. It was way worse. Not in terms of the food, that was banging, but the British owner guy would make me clean up a lot of projectile shit from his private basement toilet and rearrange his wife's shoes in their home above the shop. They had a cat named Tama which means jewel who I would feed when I was done pruning the roses. I didn't know anything about toilet-cleaning chemicals or shoe pallet arranging or cats or gardening. Actually my high school boyfriend worked there with me too. I guess we both worked a lot. Anyway I wouldn't complain about anything. You could pretty much do whatever you wanted to me at that time and I would care more about my inherited English propriety than making a scene. I hadn't become a meanie gay hothead yet. My anger was reserved for my mother and my history teacher, who met

her husband on a farm colony in Israel before settling in Cleveland. She lived around the corner. I hated her. I was angry at the American history teacher too, because he turned out to be a pedophile, and also because he watched my high school boyfriend and I have our first kiss clumsily in front of the European history teacher's house. It's like my neighborhood was stacked with evil history teachers. I guess that makes sense because my boyfriend and I both lived a couple blocks from the high school. I guess that day neither of us were working because we were kissing. I probably cried when Lemongrass closed. I used to think my little tall boyfriend was so sexy coming over in his work clothes. Black shirt black pants. He was vegetarian but brought me chicken fried rice. He's not even vegetarian anymore. I probably have seen a million movies at the Cedar Lee Theater. My friends worked there for a time. I went there with my boyfriend on dates and with my best friends' parents who were very intellectual because the Cedar Lee played a lot of arthouse films. Dinner and a movie vibes. Lemongrass and Cedar, haha, two flavors. Everything in Cleveland is its own flavor. Dick, pussy, takeout, bathrooms. It is a weirdly ambrosial place. Two thirds of my three hottest exes are from Cleveland. It was good to make love there next to the dam or in someone's parents' house or in the parking lot. It was good there. It was so good I left and almost never come back.

The cafe will close briefly today (4/8/24) from 3:00 until 3:30 to allow all staff a chance to watch the eclipse.

We will not be taking or making orders within that time frame.

If you have any questions, please ask a barista!

Thank you!

The Parking Lot at Cedar-Lee, Bordered by Silsby and Meadowbrook

El Bentivegna

1.

smooth gloom
in the oily asphalt

certain urgency
infecting

three
fucking
Range Rovers
lined up like teeth

a liminoid
long ing

an expectorated nectar
seeping

you are not going there
you go

you are not there
you are

you are not leaving there
you left

you enter
a poet
exit
a wound

you catch up
with
a friend
on new meds

together you stuff your sedan with blood
y chocolate blood
y coffee blood
y wine.

2.

shimmering pavement begins
to boil

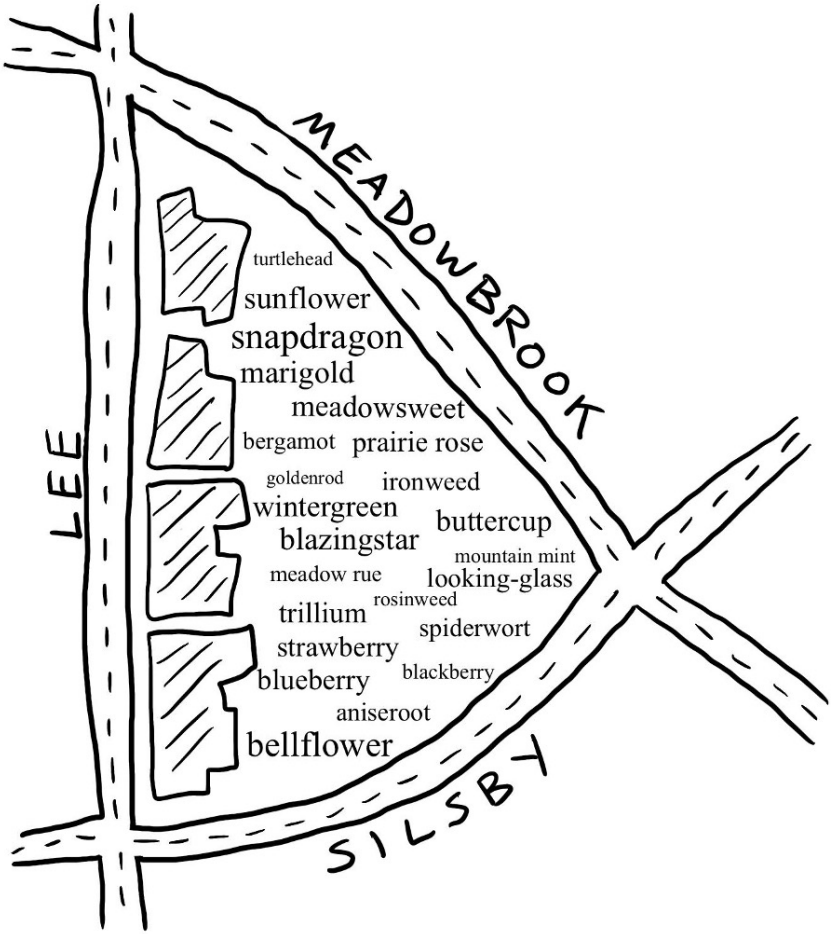
car tires sag
warp
rubber gives
way to acrid liquid

meters swell
burst
vomit
spoiled coins

cars groan
twist
dissolve
in sour soup

bubbling metal
oil oozes
drains like a boil
into one of Meadowbrook's
megapotholes

3.


MEADOWBROOK
LEE
SILSBY
turtlehead
sunflower
snapdragon
marigold
meadowsweet
bergamot
prairie rose
goldenrod
ironweed
wintergreen
buttercup
blazingstar
mountain mint
meadow rue
looking-glass
rosinweed
trillium
spiderwort
strawberry
blueberry
blackberry
aniseroot
bellflower

from Atlas

Glenn Bach

What will happen to the land was it really accidental sawdust ignition.

What is a reasonable price I threw it away and went back later and it was okay.

Backward Ohio has not taken any steps would you rather hear gun shots come on.

I think I heard rumblings about possibilities it will take a year to clear the site.

I hope this gives our area a much needed shot why even put this thought in the universe.

Those were the good ol' days or less if you live closer to one or the other.

If we find out anything untoward about the fire stranger things have happened.

As long as the city wants it to be surely common sense does not abound.

In a fully built out inner ring suburb I thought there's no way this could go wrong.

Cleveland Heights still blows I guess we need to make an effort to go there.

Wow this shit absolutely bonkers 60 million and can't fix potholes.

Glad you're grown nobody said you weren't this kind of tone does not help.

Can we get an elevator that works though can we ignore those signs.

Clean crime better than dirty crime dude the roads sure don't look good.

We are in it for the long haul and the streets are sheets of ice.

FREE PARKING

Alyssa Perry

Lee Road is closed
since when
Fairmount to Arlington
winter or when
at first Monmouth
closed too at Lee mouth
now not for me
I take a right
right before the road block
onto Monmouth cross
Fairmount to
Arlington Arlington
to North Park
right on North Park
to get to work
for three weeks
how long
closed I should turn
sooner most
days forget
drive past tall tall trees
what actually their green
I'm a fool for
over the lake low
would today remember
turn sooner
get to work
look back out
drive down
but the way
where you live
the way plus
the designated
spillover worship
parking lot

shortcut
crossed off
by power line trucks
hazard mellows
turn back up
the street
bye house bye
red stop
left on Taylor
down the road
two minutes
of my own thoughts
if I had to guess
today thought
of my dead
never mine
how will I get to
the visitation a plane
interrupted
at the Haunted
House Restaurant
can see on ahead
beyond the intersection
another closure
‘more momentary-swift
than thought’
a left off
so diverted
left on Cedar
to Lee can’t Lee
the all-day
OT light of
a cop jeep
you won’t ever
head on see
the buckled front
of the Marquee
apts used to be

the air above
parking what
if they fell
‘where life’
‘around you’
‘arranges itself’
recently what if
it falls on the
street demo
starts tomorrow
keep driving
turn off Rossmoor
anywhere
you don’t have to
go the cool dark trees

3.25.25

Saved

Recents

Cleveland Heights

Get the app

About a parking lot

Alexandra Salata

I mean to meet you
the same place as always,
the place before the place
we mean to be. I'm afraid
of getting lost. I'm afraid
to drive alone. I stopped
remembering the drives.
I wait, try to recall
the how of 'I'm here'
or almost.
The lot is empty. I mean
the whole lot of cars
is empty, all of the cars
empty except mine
and then yours and then only
yours, and mine
is just a husk waiting
to be moved, to start
and stop again, though
once you get moving
it can be hard to stop,
to stop moving, and this is one
of the reasons my brakes are worn,
always slammed, never eased
like they're meant to be.
In your car I ask if you're ready and
you tell me you're tired
of pressing the bruise, like
I'm one big bruise you can't stop
pressing, and Maybe we should stop,
stop pressing. We have stopped,
I say, and We're at the place we stop
before stopping, and
This lot is a lot like a bruise
in the land, ugly, almost

purple, and We're not even meant
to be here. We're not meant
to sit in these spaces,
the designations: you, here;
I, there. Together separate
in the same space.
Our cars, I mean, are parked
beside each other,
mine empty, yours not.
Almost there, but not—not yet.
We've stopped
in this place
we've stopped
before and will again. It's full
of people who aren't
here, instead
at the places they mean
to be while we're still
in this parking lot.

Salt and Celepalo

Mish Gajewski-Zambataro

Ancient rock Salt (halite) from Cargill Mine (that great big man-dug cavity) goes all over the Midwest, two million tons of it east and west on I-90 and south on 71, but one of Salt's favorite places to go is the Cedar Lee Parking Lot, which is a small asphalt plot not so far from where Salt was born a long time ago, where a primordial ocean (Mother of Salt) evaporated a long time ago, a long time ago leaving Salt behind in his crib in the ground, snug under the surface of Earth.

Above Salt, over a long time, formed Lake Erie, Whiskey Island, the city of Cleveland.

Locals very tenderly call asphalt Cedar Lee Parking Lot "Celepalo," a syllabic abbreviation like New York's "Tribeca." No one knows why or who started it, but very tenderly they say her name — *Celepalo, Celepalo, Celepalo* — when they drive by (perhaps down Silsby, or down the other one) or when they roll on top of her in their cars — *Celepalo, Celepalo* — looking for that special spot in her that's just for them, and every time they say her name — *Celepalo* — she shivers a little, the way anyone does when they're tenderly called-to, and her shivers make gravel and cracks in her asphalt, which are filled with tar in the summer, the smell of which sometimes reminds Celepalo of the smell of Deep-Earth, of inner oil seas the size of continents, but up here, in the open air of the surface, the tar-smell is wrong and acrid.

Like smelling chlorine out at sea.

Like coffee in your tea.

In winter the tar cools, and is unscented, and for a little while Celepalo is calm. Hugging Snow comes, landing sweetly on Celepalo. Snow makes a blanket of themself and tells Celepalo, Go to sleep now, and she does, and Snow gets so tall that the locals, whose cars are mostly low-riding compacts, can't get into Celepalo.

They crawl down Silsby sighing, *Celepalo, Celepalo*. They long to park in her. They curse Snow.

Then comes Salt. From Cargill Mine, in a truck. Salt gets flung over Celepalo, eating Snow alive. Salt doesn't mean to eat Snow — it's a matter of chemistry, not desire — then Snow is gone. It's just Salt and Celepalo.

Salt asks her, Do you know my mother, the primordial ocean?

Sleepily, still waking up, Celepalo tells Salt that she does know his mother, the primordial ocean. And she knows what Salt will ask next because it's what Salt asks every winter, every-every winter after he's flung all over her.

Celepalo misses Snow's warm silence. She misses feeling hugged and pressed-against.

Do you know where she went? Salt asks. My mother? The primordial ocean?

Tenderly, still a bit sleepily, Celepalo tells Salt the same story again, of the hundreds of millions of years that Salt has been asleep, of his mother's drawn-out evaporation, the endless shifting of the plates of Earth, all of which made here, all of which made today.

After listening, Salt begs to be put back in his Deep-Earth crib. Why am I here and not there? Salt asks. Why?

Like last winter, and the winter before and before and before, Celepalo doesn't know how to answer. How to explain to little Salt, when she herself doesn't quite understand.

Down Silsby now a local is coming, making their way — a yellow compact soon to turn onto Celepalo.

Behind it: another, another.

3 Paragraphs

Zach Savich

1

william carlos williams is said to have said according to a memory I can't confirm though I know where I read it in a parking lot in carlisle pa that some poetry is like spritzing perfume at a slaughterhouse

reading in a parking lot implies where else could you go implies nowhere could it matter yet today realizing it isn't only indictment of perfume of a perfuming instinct its veils but of the stench of the slaughter which sickens the spray

this perfume is also depiction is realism also and the slaughterhouse is also a veil gritty are the first buds and the lasting ones indistinguishable from a wasp snagged months back in an ooze rustling carapace in spring

2

the conjecture that shakespeare's later longer plays too long to stage weren't bids for bookish endurance bound for the page but "a kind of dramatic miscellany to be shaped selectively into performance" in w.b. worthen's phrase

providing "a wider range of options and opportunities for his company to think through the play's performance potentialities" and so the less cohesive the script the less authored for posterity the further its openings make us opener

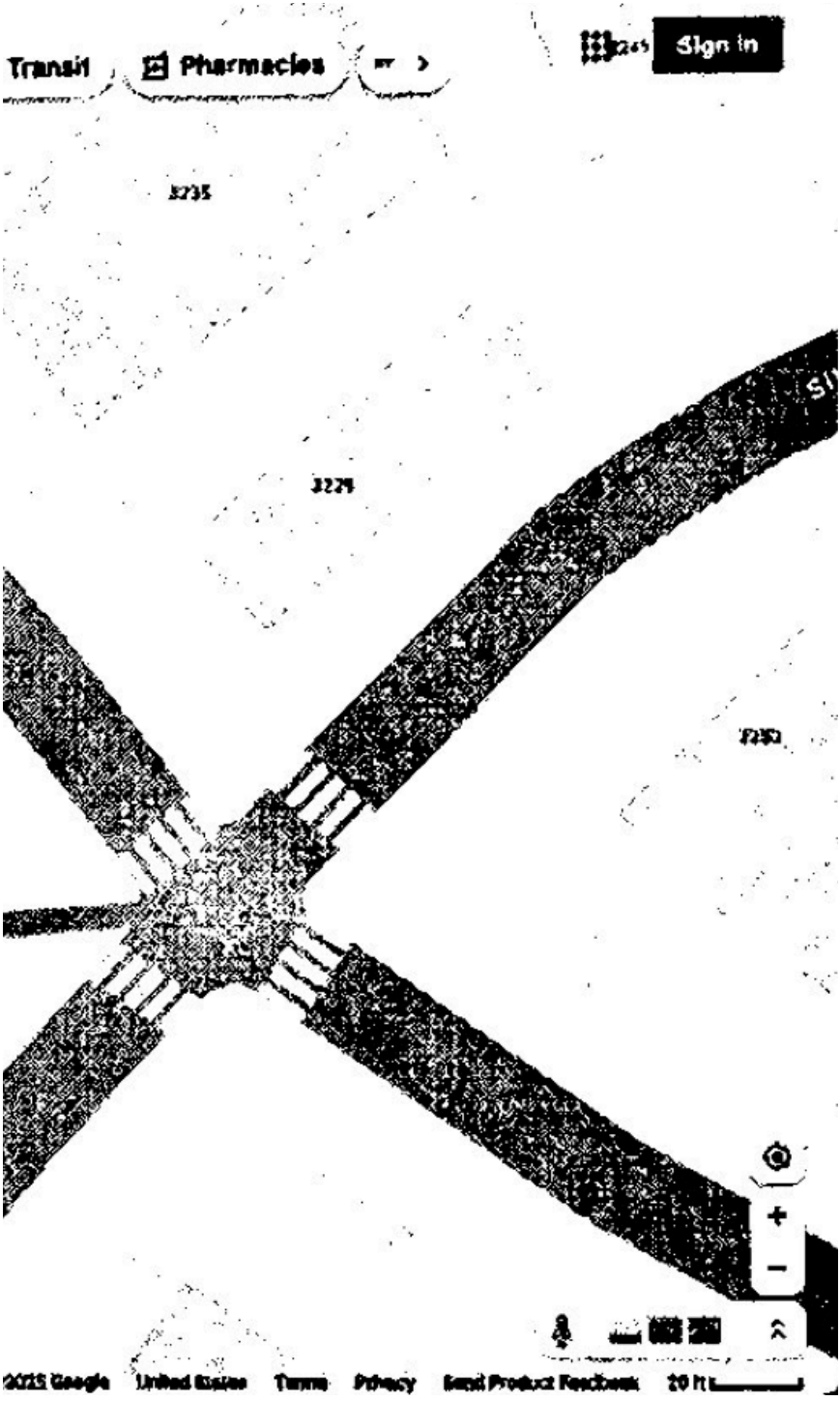
a tire sliced into a swing sliced again it's a horse and then twenty moving swirling their tree rainwater in a tread it's easy to make a monster whenever you want a monster from whatever's at hand but how to animate it the lightning that hit us is no longer lightning this wrench might be

3

I suppose a classic adult vision is this person has died and when you answer the phone and hear it you think more of the one telling than the person or your grief all those calls to make…

that's decent though the brain mostly isn't good you see the car veer across the sidewalk the yard you think this is a shortcut they know this is somebody who knows something smart about driving you see the face slack the drift you think this is somebody who is doing a funny joke for somebody's benefit then the car veers again through a hedge and softly thankfully into a tree and this former army medic is out of his car grasping the woman saying stay with us there is training in the end

"it was just a parking a lot" begins gillian conoley's poem "the world" as the car drifted we thought perhaps of throwing from high on the gym roof those contraptions each meant to cushion an egg its plummet this was a lesson about science and how to survive it was understood that one day oh one oh day we would have nothing to eat except these eggs our contraptions had saved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Pharmacies
Sign in
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United States
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Privacy
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